



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, May 26, 2005**  
**Wisconsin Rapids City Council Chambers**  
**9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**LRSC Members Present**

**Wisconsin Counties Association:**

Dan Fedderly  
Roger Laning  
Dick Leffler

**WisDOT Staff Present:**

Scott Bush  
Rod Clark  
Michael Erickson  
Susie Forde  
Mary Forlenza

**Wisconsin Towns Association:**

Marilyn Bhend  
Arlyn Helm  
Gene Lueck  
Marv Samson

**Wisconsin Alliance of Cities:**

Dave Botts  
Rick Jones  
Jeff Mantes  
Paula Vandehey

**Regional Planning Commissions/  
Metro Planning Organizations:**

Don Kush  
Walt Raith

**Others Present:**

Sonia Dubielzig UW – Madison  
Mary Ebeling UW - Madison  
Mike Hess  
Ernie Wittwer UW – Madison

**League of Wisconsin Municipalities:**

Bill Beil, Jr.  
Bill Handlos  
Dennis Jordan  
Dennis Melvin

**LRSC Members Excused:**

Emmer Shields  
Ken Yunker

### **Opening Business (Don Kush, Mary Forlenza)**

The meeting was called to order shortly after 9 a.m.

### **Review & Approval of February 4<sup>th</sup> minutes**

Minutes from February 4<sup>th</sup> were reviewed and accepted as written.

### **Administrative Items**

#### **LRSC 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary June 20<sup>th</sup>**

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) staff has been working on assorted details concerning this event. A newly introduced 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Local Roads and Street Council (LRSC) Logo was included with the release of the Spring LRSC Newsletter and will be added to the LRSC Web site, future 2005 Newsletter's and other materials that are distributed on behalf of the LRSC during this calendar year.

The WisDOT Office of Public Affairs has drafted a Commendation on behalf of the LRSC for their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and is in the process of working out details of a presentation including the Governor and WisDOT Secretary. These arrangements have not been finalized as of the May 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the LRSC. WisDOT staff will keep LRSC membership informed to when this event is scheduled. A draft of the Commendation was distributed to Council members for their review.

The Summer LRSC Newsletter will highlight accomplishments during the 10 years of the Council's creation. We hope to include a photo of the Commendation ceremony with the Governor and Secretary, and an article spotlighting this event.

#### **Council/Local Association Use of STH Maintenance Paper**

The STH Maintenance Paper was a joint effort by multiple committees' of the LRSC, and lead by Emmer Shields with assistance by WisDOT staff. The final product was titled, "*Jeopardizing State Trunk Highway Maintenance*". This information article was reviewed and approved for distribution by WisDOT staff and the Secretary's Office. It was also included in the LRSC Spring Newsletter and distributed to over 1200 local officials, the Governor, and State Legislature. From all indications and comments, it has been well received and found to be informative and provides good information concerning the current constraints concerning state trunk highway maintenance.

Dan Fedderly thought it was a good product and useful to County Highway Commissioners and others who provide these services to take to their legislators and other elected officials to help make the case for better funding of STH Maintenance in Wisconsin. All members of the LRSC felt this was a accomplishment of the Council and it is products like this information article that bring the talents of the Council to the forefront on important issues that concern local transportation officials.

Walt Raith wanted to know if WisDOT staff had sent this information article directly to the legislative committee's working on these transportation related issues. Though the LRSC Newsletter is sent to individual legislators, it was unclear if this article had been sent to the

individual committee's working on these issues at the state legislature. WisDOT staff will follow up on this question.

#### **Local Association Support of Local Tax Freeze Paper & DNR Single Point of Contact**

Mary Forlenza informed the Council that even though there was support concerning the Local Tax Freeze (Tax Payers Bill of Rights - TABOR) issue by the Secretary's office, it was felt that the timing was off to go ahead with this during the current biennial budget process. The TABOR issue was brought forth during a meeting of the Executive Committee of the LRSC with the WisDOT Secretary's Office, and it was suggested that the Council examine how it might affect local transportation budgets in the future if it were implemented. In the same fashion that the Council addressed the STH Maintenance issue, a group of committee's addressed the TABOR issue. An informational article was drafted and distributed to council membership. It was then presented to WisDOT for further review and approval. It was after this review that WisDOT leadership decided that it might not be in the best interest of the Council to present this information article through the LRSC at the present time. Don Kush suggested that if the various associations wanted to use this information; that they still have the ability to use this article, but that it should represent the view of that particular association and not WisDOT.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Single Point of Contact was included in the WisDOT budget to the Governor but was taken out because the Governor's office didn't agree with the transfer of positions by WisDOT to the DNR to implement this program. The fundamental tenets of the program are acceptable to everyone concerning this concept, but how it will be implemented and its future are still being discussed and worked on. DNR is still working with WisDOT to see if a solution to the funding and positions can be worked out, but DNR has been targeted for budget cutting during this current biennial, and how high a priority this new program is has yet to be discerned. WisDOT staff will keep the Council informed on any progress concerning this streamlining initiative.

Don Kush and other members of the Council commented that it was interesting to note how the legislature could move on Water Shoreline and Air Quality permitting streamlining, but have issues concerning environmental streamlining of local road improvement projects. It was agreed that the council will continue to support this initiative and bring it forward again in the future.

#### **SCOLPS Wrap-Up & Future of Local Program Administration (Rod Clark - WisDOT)**

The Secretary's Committee on Local Program Streamlining (SCOLPS) finished and released their final report May 2005. The final report was distributed to LRSC membership for their review. Rod discussed the background of the committee and the recommendations and accomplishments that came out of this committee. Rod also emphasized that through this committee many changes had occurred and that some recommendations and projects are still in the process of implementation.

The SCOLPS Committee brought WisDOT staff, and other state agencies and interested parties together to work toward local program streamlining. SCOLPS has directly affected WisDOT operations and has been a benefit to the local programs and delivery of services. Along with other efforts, including a review of the Federal Local Programs by the Federal Highways Administration, many improvements have been acted upon and accomplishments made. A major accomplishment was the *Final Report of the Delivery Cost Study Group, April*

2000. This report examined the cost differences between Federal Aid Projects and 'in-house' projects; with an emphasis on creating new approaches and innovations to reduce project delivery time and project costs. Many recommendations that were made from this Report have been implemented by WisDOT and become policy. A major recommendation that still needs to be addressed and finalized is the "Early Local Project Scoping" process. WisDOT is still committed to this recommendation and is still working out the details of how this might occur with-in the Agency.

Some of the Committee's major accomplishments include:

- Process of "Early Scoping of Local Projects";
- Expanding Chapter 8 of the Department's Facilities Development Manual (FDM), including local input through the committee on this process;
- DNR issues that include both wetlands mitigation & local project permit streamlining; &
- Providing the forum for interaction between all stakeholders concerning these issues.

In May 2005, WisDOT announced its reorganization. Kevin Chesnik, new administrator of the Division of Transportation Systems Development (DTSD), has proposed creating a new group to continue on with the work initiatives brought about by the SCOLPS group. The Chair of this group will be Director of the Bureau of Project Development, Don Miller. This new group is only in the initial stages and nothing has been finalized as to membership or other details as of the LRSC May 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Rod will keep the council informed as to developments concerning this new group. It is known that the group will meet quarterly and will address issues and concerns from local transportation officials. This group will continue to address the recommendations not completed by the SCOLPS, and other local issues as they become known.

Every member of the LRSC agrees that we need to maintain some form of committee to address local concerns, and that prior recommendations need to move forward and be implemented. Don was concerned what role the LRSC would assume on this newly formed committee. Rod suggested that the Regulatory, Environmental and Legislative Committee (REAL) be the body that would bring forward discussion concerning the local perspective to these programs.

The LRSC needs to stay involved with an emphasis on the consistency of the local program delivery process between regions (formerly districts), and the level of services provided by regions (formerly districts). Changes are going to occur in the future concerning these issues and it is important for the LRSC to stay involved.

A current major issue is the use of management consultants by Districts 1 & 2, and if this process should be expanded to the entire agency. WisDOT is currently using two models to delivery the local program, and needs to make a decision on how this is going to occur in the future. Bill Handlos and Dennis Jordan both discussed why they did not want the process handled by management consultants. At issue was bigger vs. smaller projects, and would consultants pay particular attention to the state road system vs. the local road system. Whatever decision is made concerning this issue; the LRSC needs to make sure that those making the final decision know its position. Rod assured the LRSC that those making the decision concerning this issue are aware of these local concerns and the major goal is to provide consistency of services through out the state regardless of which model is chosen.

Recommendations have been made concerning this issue to the internal WisDOT group working on this issue. Both pros & cons have been discussed and will be continued in discussion through the coming weeks, but no decisions have been made. One recommendation could be a central location for all local program delivery, one identifiable entity charged with the local program throughout the state. Though this may help with reporting it has other drawbacks also, such as no individual knowledge of location and project sponsor. A final decision has not been made concerning this issue.

### **WISLR & PASERWARE (Susie Forde – WisDOT)**

A major announcement to the LRSC is that PASERWARE 3.0 Development is discontinued. The University of Wisconsin Transportation Information Center (UW – TIC) and WisDOT have concluded that the expense and complexity required to complete development and maintain PASERWARE 3.0 would compromise both the usefulness of PASERWARE as well as its long-term data sharing objectives with WisDOT. WisDOT and UW – TIC sent a letter to this effect to users of PASERWARE. A major hurdle was the use of the ACCESS program in Microsoft (MS) and the various versions that are used by the users of PASERWARE throughout the State. In some cases, older versions of ACCESS could become corrupted and destroyed all ACCESS files on that users machine. No suitable programming could work around this problem, and it was jointly decided to take what was learned and developed for PASERWARE 3.0 development and transfer its functionality to WISLR. WisDOT staff is in the process of making those changes available to WISLR users.

PASERWARE 2.5 software does not interface with WISLR. Current users will not be able to upload data to WISLR. WISLR uses an 'On – AT' bases for segmentation, which is not the same formatting that occurs with PASERWARE 2.5. History of pavement management will not move forward, thus it will become obsolete over time, or you will need to maintain two separate databases on two separate operating systems. However, you can continue to use PASERWARE 2.5 but future downloads of WISLR data, training or support will not be available. WISLR will be the primary tool for download and submittal options for meeting pavement rating submittal requirements in the future.

There are many benefits to the discontinuation of the PASERWARE 3.0 development:

- Single point of contact – WISLR;
- Locals will not need to maintain changes in two systems, will save money and time not supporting two separate systems;
- Ability to control changes between versions of MS Access and operating systems. More synchronization of applications because WISLR will be the sole system; and
- UW-TIC & WisDOT will be working in tandem on future Design/Development.

The Pavement Analysis Tool is ready and available for use by WISLR users. This tool has many practical uses and has been well received by those that are currently using it. Bill Handlos commented on how the instructions and application is user friendly and thoughtfully designed for the end user. It doesn't take an engineering technician to understand, and anyone who may chose to use this application will find useful information that will help them understand many different aspects concerning their local pavement management practices.

Susie commented on the status of WISLR today. WISLR is only three years old, but currently, all certification of pavement mileage is being completed through WISLR for

WisDOT. Currently there are over 750 WISLR users through out the State from every type of community. Any local community with a computer can access WISLR from their location.

To help comply with §86.302(2), WISLR has developed new tools that are now available. This statute requires that every two years, municipalities and counties are to submit pavement ratings to WisDOT that represent the physical condition of roadways under their jurisdiction. WISLR now has combined mapping capabilities and the database together; prior to improvements made to WISLR in the last year, these two functions occurred separately. Also, locals can access their pavement spreadsheet download from their locations, rather than requesting a copy from WisDOT. All of these improvements are to make the pavement ratings entry/submittal process as easy as possible for local governments in the future.

Susie conducted a live computer simulation of this process in front of the LRSC during her presentation. Susie brought up a local town in Wisconsin and showed the group just how simple it is to retrieve and download the spreadsheet containing pavement information. Susie noted to members of the group that once you update your pavement information in WISLR that you need to close out of the WISLR application in-order for those updates to be recognized by the system. She also showed the group a newly developed brochure that helps locals with general questions and problems that have been encountered in the past by locals when submitting their pavement ratings. This brochure is available now and will be distributed through out the state in the coming months.

Susie presented a new function of WISLR being developed and should be available in the fall of 2005. It is a 5 – Year Budget Planning tool. It will allow local governments to create a 5 – year budget plan and the capability to evaluate impacts of the plan on system conditions throughout the 5 – year cycle. Susie gave a demonstration of this new functionality to the group and showed how simple it was to use this new tool.

WISLR is moving forward as the sole program for future pavement ratings for the state. The development of PASERWARE and the technical problems that occurred are not a total lost to local governments and WisDOT. Many of the practical functions that were developed for PASERWARE will now be developed and transferred into WISLR. What we learned from PASERWARE's development has benefited the future development of WISLR and will only help make WISLR a better project in the future as more tools and functionality are incorporated into WISLR as needed. The Infrastructure and Management (IM) Committee of the LRSC will continue to work with WisDOT and WISLR staff to monitor and advise on improvements or needed tools as WISLR continues to grow and develop.

### **STUDYING WISLR – A SURVEY OF USERS & USES (Ernie Wittwer – UW Madison)**

Four graduate students from the Transportation Management and Policy Certificate program conducted a study of WISLR. Sonia Dubielzig and Mary Ebeling presented their findings to the LRSC during this presentation. This survey was conducted in 2004 and is somewhat dated because of changes presently occurring with the WISLR program and PASERWARE's discontinuation and support by both the UW –TIC and WisDOT.

The group conducted both personal interviews with selected individuals who both developed and use WISLR and a telephone survey of 78 local governments from around the state.

Some of the major conclusions from this study include:

- Of those surveyed, 87% had knowledge of WISLR;
- Primary use is checking certification of roadway mileage;
- WISLR training presentations are more useful than the CD's for training;
- That larger more complex local governments tend to access WISLR more;
- That the functionality of WISLR has not been fully developed and/or utilized at the time of this study;
- That many local governments lack the needed high-speed internet connection or Plotters for printing maps found in WISLR; and
- Confusion still exists between the PASERWARE program and WISLR.

Many of the recommendations that the group offered from their study have already begun. PASERWARE has been discontinued. This will elevate any confusion between the two systems, with WISLR being the sole pavement inventory system for local government. WISLR staff is currently working with UW – TIC to implement full functionality as quickly as possible to WISLR. Some of the recommendations that have not been addressed but might be of use in the future include:

- Create a WISLR user group, via e-mail or the WISLR site;
- Encourage counties, MPO/RPC's & private firms to input data for small jurisdictions; &
- Do a more comprehensive survey of users in the future after these changes have been made.

This was the first survey concerning WISLR and even though it was slightly outdated when completed, it can be used in the future to help draft an updated and better survey to be used in the future.

### **WisDOT Corridor Planning Summary Report (Kassandra Walbrun, WisDOT)**

Kassandra Walbrun discussed the Corridor Management Workgroup report. Kassandra reported that the goal of this group was to propose a process for managing corridors that focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of efforts to achieve short and long term viability of the state highway system. This is not a plan or policy document.

The mission of the Workgroup was to:

- Outline the elements of the corridor management process;
- Determine the appropriate timing and application of corridor management related tools; and
- Discuss the tools/processes that should be improved.

The reason this workgroup was created was to deal with the limited state resources available and the current demand that outweighs those resources. WisDOT must begin to coordinate activities related to corridor management that facilitate better connection between local governments, land developers, citizens, and WisDOT Districts (Regions) offices that bring these groups together before projects are purposed and move to completion. It also will help make this process consistent throughout the state.

The major benefit to this process is preservation of state highway facilities for longer periods of time; by predefined agreements developed between WisDOT and local governments on

issues of access and future development along these corridors. The corridor management process includes four basis steps:

- Districts (Regions) prioritize corridors for management for further developing a Corridor Management Vision. This is both quantitative and qualitative analysis;
- Develop a Corridor Management Vision. More detailed information becomes available as more parties are brought into the development process and public input is sought. This is done on a corridor by corridor process;
- Identify and select strategies and tools to achieve the Corridor Management Vision. Local planning and zoning rules, and smart growth plans are some of those tools; and
- Implement the Corridor Management Vision.

The major hurdle to this process is once it is in place and being implemented, that no exceptions can be made to the agreed upon Vision of that Corridor. This process will have no teeth, if any time a developer, local government, WisDOT or land owner requests an exception, that it is granted; we will find ourselves back at the current situation of overly developed corridors.

WisDOT is currently utilizing some of these concepts on the current state trunk highway system, but the complete process has not been enacted as of today. Currently bits and pieces of the Corridor Management process are now used by the Districts (Regions) but not fully implemented. This process is on going and will continue through WisDOT in the future. There is a general understanding that resources will be limited going into the future and more demands placed on WisDOT to preserve the current system, and that the Corridor Management approach is the best way to accomplish preservation of the system with the least amount of resources. Planning works best if it is done prior to development and implementation rather than after improvements have already occurred.

## **Closing Business**

### **Other Issues**

Walt Raith motioned that the LRSC draft a letter in support of Smart Growth that is now under the radar of the Legislative Joint Finance Committee. After a brief discussion concerning this issue it was agreed that the LRSC would create a letter showing its support for Smart Growth as well as Trans. 233. Walt agreed to draft the letter and Don Kush would review. This letter would then be sent to the Secretary's office for review and approval.

### **Agenda topics for September 22<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting:**

- Update State – Federal Budgets
- Mary Forlenza (WisDOT) Local program administration
- New program roll-out (LRIP approvals/CMAQ/TSMEGP)
- Joe Nestler (WisDOT) WISLR update
- Fall Committee Work – Committee Updates

**Meeting Adjourned at 2:05 pm**